

Applicants also petition for a five (5) month extension of time to respond to the Office Action. Enclosed is a check in the amount of One Thousand Eight Hundred and Fifty Dollars (\$1850.00) to cover the extension fee as required by 37 C.F.R. §§1.17(a)(5) and 1.136(a).

IN THE CLAIMS:

Cancel claims 23-26.

Amend claims 1-22 as follows:

- Sub B1
1. (Amended) Use of a laminate having an inner layer comprising [which contains] a polyolefin, an outer layer comprising [which contains] a polyester, a polyolefin or a polyamide and a intermediate layer comprising [which contains] a silicon oxide in the manufacture of a barrier material to ethylene oxide gas.
2. (Amended) Use according to claim 1, wherein [characterised] in that the polyolefin is a polypropylene or a polyethylene
3. (Amended) Use according to claim 1, wherein [or 2, characterised in that] the polyester for the outer layer of the laminate is polyethylene terephthalate.
4. (Amended) Use according to claim 1, wherein [2 or 3, characterised in that] the polyamide is nylon.
5. (Amended) Use according to claim 1, wherein [any one of claims 1 to 4, characterised in that] the silicon oxide-containing intermediate layer is a layer of silicon oxide deposited in-between the facing surfaces of the inner and outer layers.

6. (Amended) Use according claim 1, wherein [to any one of claims 1 to 4, characterised in that] the intermediate layer is a composite layer comprising the silicon oxide and a polymeric matrix or substrate therefor.

7. (Amended) Use according to claim 6, wherein [characterised in that] the matrix or substrate is of a polyester, a polyamide, a polypropylene or a polyvinyl alcohol.

8. (Amended) Use according to claim 7, wherein [characterised in that] the polyester for the matrix or substrate is polyethylene terephthalate.

9. (Amended) Use according to claim 7, wherein [characterised in that] the polyamide for the matrix or substrate is nylon.

10. (Amended) Use according to claim 1, wherein [characterised in that] the laminate has an inner layer of polypropylene, an outer layer of polyethylene terephthalate and an intermediate composite layer of a silicon oxide with polyethylene terephthalate or polyvinyl alcohol.

11. (Amended) A container (6; 106) which is intended to be [has been] exposed to ethylene oxide gas wherein [characterised in that] the container is formed from a laminate having an inner layer comprising [which contains] a polyolefin, an outer layer comprising [which contains] a polyester, a polyolefin or a polyamide and an intermediate layer comprising [which contains] a silicon oxide.

12. (Amended) An assembly (10; 110) which is intended to be [has been] exposed to ethylene oxide gas comprising an article (3; 103) intended to be sterilized [sterilised] by the ethylene oxide gas and a sealed container (6; 106) formed from a laminate having an inner layer comprising [which contains] a polyolefin, an outer layer comprising [which contains] a polyester, a polyolefin or a polyamide and an intermediate layer comprising [which contains] a silicon oxide.

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13. (Amended) The [An] assembly according to claim 12, wherein [characterised in that] the assembly is a medical assembly with the article being a medical instrument (3; 103) for use in a medical procedure and the container containing an article or substance which is to be applied to the instrument as part of the medical procedure.

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14. (Amended) The [An] assembly according to claim 13, wherein [characterised in that] the medical instrument is a hydrophilic outer surface coated urethral catheter (3; 103) and the container is a wetting fluid container (6; 106) which contains a sterile wetting fluid for wetting of the hydrophilic coating of the catheter prior to use.

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15. (Amended) The [An] assembly according to claim 12, wherein [any one of claims 12 to 14, characterised in that] the sealed container is an inner container and [that] the assembly further comprises an outer container (1; 101) having an inner volume accessed by the ethylene oxide gas and in which the inner container and article are disposed.

X
16. (Amended) The [An] assembly according to claim 15, wherein [characterised in that] the assembly is a sealed storage package with the outer container being the packaging in which the article and inner container are kept until they are required to be used.

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17. (Amended) The [An] assembly according to claim 16, wherein [15 when appendant to claim 14, characterised in that] the outer container is a urine collection bag (1; 101).

18. (Amended) The [An] assembly according to any one of claims 12 to 15 or 17, wherein [characterised in that] the assembly is contained in a storage package.

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19. (Amended) A storage package which contains a medical instrument (3; 103) having a hydrophilic outer surface coating and a sealed container (6; 106) which contains a sterile wetting fluid for wetting of the hydrophilic coating of the instrument and which is constructed from a

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laminate having an inner layer comprising [which contains] a polyolefin, an outer layer comprising [which contains] a polyester, a polyolefin or a polyamide and an intermediate layer comprising [which contains] a silicon oxide.

20. (Amended) The [A] storage package according to claim 19, wherein [characterised in that] the medical instrument is a urethral catheter for bladder drainage (3; 103).

X
21. (Amended) The [A] storage package according to claim 20, wherein [characterised in that] the package further contains a urine collection bag (1; 101).

X
22. (Amended) A process for forming a storage package containing a medical instrument (3; 103) having a hydrophilic outer surface coating and a wetting fluid container (6; 106) which contains a wetting fluid for wetting of the hydrophilic outer surface coating of the medical instrument comprising the steps of forming the wetting fluid container from a laminate having an inner layer comprising [which contains] a polyolefin, an outer layer comprising [which contains] a polyester, a polyolefin or a polyamide and an intermediate layer comprising [which contains] a silicon oxide, subjecting the container to a steam or gamma radiation sterilizing [sterilising] process to sterilize [sterilise] the wetting fluid in the container, assembling the medical instrument and sterilized [sterilised] wetting fluid container together into an assembly, subjecting the assembly to an ethylene oxide gas sterilizing [sterilising] process to sterilize [sterilise] the medical instrument and enclosing the sterilize [sterilised] assembly in a storage package container.
